

Ask the Chief of the Anna Police: A weekly column allowing readers access to useful information about law enforcement issues in the Anna area.

This column is the personal opinion of Kenny Jenks and is based on his 29+ years of policing experience. It is not necessarily the official opinion of the City of Anna or the Anna Police Department. If you wish to Email, include your name and address in the correspondence. Your information will be edited before sending it to print.

Hello Readers,

I receive between 75-100 Emails each week from persons who would like to converse about the activities of the police in Anna and surrounding areas. I can't respond to or print all of them, but I do read them!

Jeff from West Crossing sent the following question: ***Chief Jenks, I am a Libertarian and want to ask you about laws that are passed that limit our freedoms. Texas has a seat belt law and I am subject to a fine if I do not wear it while driving my vehicle on the street. I am interested in your opinion about these types of laws. Why am I subjected to this limit of my freedom when the police make me wear my seat belt?***

Hi Jeff, You asked for my opinion. Most people that I know regret when they do that!

Personally, I am politically and socially conservative. I believe in limited government. With the ever-increasing number of citizens in Texas (and the USA), we must, as citizens, be willing to sacrifice some of our freedoms when they infringe upon others. How, you ask? The State of Texas Legislature passed the mandatory seat belt law. Now it is reasonable to assume that rising medical costs for the Insurance Industry had something to do with getting the bill passed, but regardless, insurance costs were rising as a direct result of the treatment of injuries sustained by persons involved in minor crashes who were not wearing a seatbelt. The Legislature's answer to this was the seat belt law.

The reasonableness I see in this law that affects my personal freedoms is that Texas has more than 20 million residents with a large percentage in the DFW Metroplex, of which we in Anna are a part. Traffic volume leads to congestion and congestion leads to traffic crashes. People in traffic crashes who are wearing their seatbelts are less likely to be injured or killed. In fact, 63% of those killed in traffic crashes are not wearing seat belts. Wearing a seat belt is still the single most effective thing we can do to save lives and reduce society's demand on Public Safety services and medical facilities. That is my personal opinion.

Lastly Jeff, in my professional opinion, the police do not "make" you wear your seatbelt. You always have the choice not to. You will have to accept the possibility that you might have to pay a fee for the decision of not wearing your

seatbelt. That fee is also known as a fine. Please wear your seatbelts; they work, it is the right thing to do, and, most importantly, it's the law. I'm now off of my "soap box."

Reminder: Outdoor Storm Sirens Tested (weather permitting)

First Wednesday of the month @ 12 noon.

***Phone numbers: Dial 911 in an emergency.** To have a police officer sent to you in a non-emergency, call 972-547-5350. During normal business hours, the APD number is 972-924-2848.

If you have a question or comment, please email: kjenks@annatexas.gov